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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 1478

JOINT EMBASSY-JUSPAO MESSAGE

1. FOLLOWING PARAPHRASED AND DIRECT QUOTATIONS INTERVIEW OF AMBASSADOR BY BERT QUINT OF CBS FOR TC SHOW ON VIETNAMESE ELECTIONS PRODUCED HERE FOR FUTURE USE ON WALTER CRONKITE PROGRAM.

Q. WHAT IS IMPORTANCE ELECTIONS TO US?

A. "WELL I THINK THE ELECTIONS ARE IMPORTANT AS AN INDICATION OF THE ABILITY OF THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE TO ENGAGE IN THE EVOLUTION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS." OUTLINED CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION TO WRITE CONSTITUTION, HAMLET AND VILLAGE ELECTIONS AS PRELUDE TO IMPORTANT NATIONAL ELECTIONS. "PSYCHOLOGICALLY IT WILL BE AN INDICATION TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE THAT SVN IS HERE TO STAY THAT IT HAS STABILITY, THAT THERE IS A CONSTITUTIONAL GOV-

ERNMENT. IT WILL BE AN INDICATION TO ALL VIETNAMESE, INILUDING THE VC, THAT THERE IS A GOVERNMENT HERE TO WHICH THEY CAN ADHERE AND UNDER WHICH THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS WILL BE PROTECTED."

Q. WOULD IT NOT BE BETTER FOR WAR EFFORT AND TO THE US IF A MILITARY MAN WERE ELECTED?

A. "WE HAVE NO PREFERENCE FOR ANY CANDIDATE. WE ARE SUPPORTING NO CANDIDATE, AND WE OPPOSE NO CANDIDATE."

(1) Q. WHAT IS US POLICY IN THE ELECTIONS?

A. TO LET THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE CHOOSE FREELY THEIR OWN LEADERS.

Q. SOME VIETNAMESE ARE SAYING US HAD A ROLE IN COMBINING THE THIEU-KY TICKETS.

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A. "AS YOU KNOW, THIS WAS SOMETHING THE VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES BROUGHT ABOUT AND HANDLED."

Q. DID YOU HAVE ANY NEGOTIATIONS OR DISCUSSION WITH THE VIETNAMESE IN BRINGING ABOUT ANY TICKETS HERE?

A. "THE POLITICAL SITUATION, AS FAR AS THE VIETNAMESE ARE CONCERNED, IS THEIR OWN INTERNAL BUSINESS. IT IS NOT OURS. WE HAVE MADE THAT VERY CLEAR."

Q. WHAT IS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS AND DOMINICAN ELECTIONS?

A. SITUATION IS DIFFERENT...HERE WE ARE DEALING WITH ELECTIONS

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HANDLED BY A GOVERNMENT. THE STRUGGLE HERE IS TO PREVENT AGGRESSION FROM WITHOUT, WHEREAS STRUGGLE THERE WAS INTERNAL.

Q. IS US DOING ANYTHING TO MAKE SURE ELECTIONS WILL BE FAIR?

A. OBVIOUSLY ELECTION HAS TO BE ADMINISTERED BY GVN. WE HAVE MADE CLEAR IT IS TO THEIR INTEREST THAT THE ELECTIONS BE FAIR AND FREE.

Q. IN THE DOMINICAN CRISIS THERE WAS POSSIBILITY OF A COUP. DO YOU SEE SUCH A POSSIBILITY HERE?

A. "I DON'T THINK SO. NO."

Q. WITH EXCLUSION SOME CANDIDATES FROM ELECTIONS, THERE IS TALK HERE THIS MAKES ELECTIONS UNFAIR. WILL SUCH TALK BE DETRIMENTAL TO US PRESTIGE?

A "I DON'T KNOW. THIS QUESTION OF THE ELECTION AND CANDIDATES IS AN INTERNAL PROBLEM OF THE VIETNAMESE AND IS BEING HANDLED BY THE VIETNAMESE ASSEMBLY."

Q. CAN THE US BE HURT BY OUTCOME OF ELECTIONS?

A. VERY DIFFICULT TO SAY. WE LOOK FORWARD TO FREE, FAIR ELECTIONS AND I THINK THAT IS WHAT MAJORITY OF VIETNAMESE WANT. TO HAVE FREE, FAIR ELECTION, RESULTING IN CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENTAL INSTI-TUTION WILL BE GREAT CREDIT TO VIETNAMESE.

Q. HOW MUCH PERSONAL CONTACT DO YOU HAVE IN DEALING WITH VIETNAMESE

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GOVERNMENT?

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A. I HAVE A GOOD DEAL OF CONTACT WITH THIEU AND KY IN NORMAL COURSE OF BUSINESS.

Q. HOW IS THE WAR GOING?

A. "WE ARE MAKING STEADY PROGRESS." IT IS QUITE EVIDENT THAT NVA HAS HAD NO MAJOR MILITARY SUCCESSES. ON CONTRARY WE INFLICT HEAVY LOSSES WHEN ABLE TO ENGAGE THEM. GVN TROOP PERFORMANCE STEADILY IMPROVING? THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT SUCCESSES BY ARVN IN I CORPS, III CORPS AND DELTA. PACIFICATION PROGRAM OFF TO SLOW START BECAUSE IT IS A NEW CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATION AND SET-UP. TRAINING OF MILITARY IN NEW ROLE OF PACIFICATION IS GOING ON, AS IS TRAINING OF RD TEAMS AT VUNG TAU.

Q. HOW LONG WILL WAR LAST?

A. "I DO NOT WANT TO PUT ANY TIME FRAME ON THIS. I THINK WE ARE MAKING STEADY PROGRESS."

Q. ARE THERE ANY FEELERS TOWARD PEACE NEGOTIATIONS NOW?

A. "NONE THAT I KNOW OF. NO."

Q. HOW OFTEN DO YOU REPORT TO PRESIDENT?

A. "I REPORT REGULARLY, OF COURSE."

Q. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY PLAN FOR THE PRESIDENT TO COME TO VIETNAM OR SEA IN NEAR FUTURE?

A. "NO. I DON'T KNOW OF ANY. THAT'S A QUESTION FOR THE PRESIDENT."

Q. DOES THE US MAKE REQUESTS FOR TROOPS OF FREE WORLD FRIENDLY ALLIES THAT IT IS NOT GETTING? IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN TELL US ABOUT OTHER NATIONS...?

A. NO

Q. THERE ARE NUMBER VERY PERMANENT SITES FOR US MILITARY BEING BUILT HERE. DO YOU THINK THIS COULD BECOME PART IN NEGOTIATION, THAT IS RETENTION OF US MILITARY PRESENCE?

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A. I CAN'T SAY NOW HOW NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT DEVELOP. WE MADE STATEMENT AT MANILA ON WITHDRAWAL OF US TROOPS AFTER AGGRESSION ENDS. I THINK BASE FACILITIES WOULD BE USEFUL IN PEACE TIME TO VIETNAMESE ECONOMY.

Q. DO YOU FEEL PROPORTION US COMBAT TO SUPPORT TROOPS IS PROPER ONE?

A. THAT IS QUESTION MORE APPROPRIATE FOR GENERAL WESTMORELAND.
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 1478

Q. WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF US IN VIETNAM?

A. "I WOULD SAY, FIRST TO ACHIEVE A LASTING, DURABLE, HONORABLE PEACE THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS THAT WOULD BE SATISFACTORY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM, TO OURSELVES, AND TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND TO THE LIBERATION FRONT SECONDLY, TO PERMIT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TO DETERMINE FREELY THE KIND OF GOVERNMENT UNDER WHICH THEY WISH TO LIVE. THIRD, TO SUPPORT THE VIETNAMESE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO BUILD A VIABLE ECONOMY, AND IN BUILDING THEIR POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND FOURTH, AS PRESIDENT JOHNSON HAS MADE QUITE CLEAR, THAT ONCE PEACE IS OBTAINED TO ENCOURAGE THE FORMATION OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD BY MUTUAL COOPERATION."

Q. HAVE YOU BEEN MAKING ANY PROGRESS TOWARD THESE GOLAS?

A. WE HAVE MADE CLEAR OUR WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE AT ANY TIME. SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION FROM HANOI THAT IT IS YET WILLING TO DO SO. VIETNAM IS MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD ESTABLISHING POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, AND DESPITE WAR THE ECONOMY IS PROGRESSING. WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS, SECURITY IS BEING EXPANDED. MORE HAMLETS AND VILLAGES ARE SECURE AND WILL BE THE OBJECT OF PACIFICATION EFFORTS ON PART OF SVN WITH OUR SUPPORT AND ADVICE. "SO I WOULD SAY WE ARE MAKING MEASURABLE PROGRESS."

Q. IN YOUR MONTHS HERE, WHAT HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY SURPRISING?

A. "WELL, THAT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY. I MUST CONFESS I FIND THE PROBLEMS HERE COMPLEX AND ABSORBING. THAT MAY BE SOMETHING OF AN UNDERSTATEMENT." (LAUGHTER)

Q. WHAT DO YOU FIND AS ONE OF GREATEST PROBLEMS?

A. "THAT IS ALSO HARD TO IDENTIFY. I'VE KEPT BUSY. YOU MIGHT SAY THAT." (LAUGHTER) BUNKER
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